



Scapegoat



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Chapter 1 by Amelia Rose

According to everyone in the basecamp, it is entirely my fault that the rest of my patrol is dead. This is not true. It's just that simply, through grief, they're making me their scapegoat.

Throwing all their blame onto me.

Which is somewhat understandable, but a royal pain in the ass. Everyone currently hates me, and that means I get smaller portion sizes at mealtimes, death glares from strangers, less free time above and more time underground, and to top it all off I get assigned the worst jobs there are, like sewerage checks, livestock cleaning and cleaning the vents. This sucks, but the worst thing about it all is that all my friends are dead and everyone blames me.

Chapter 2 by JM



They call me a pariah, a curse, a beacon of death. Or they say that I'm cowardly, accusing me of fleeing from danger while my squadmates ran into enemy fire.

Sometimes I want to tell them the truth about myself and about my friends--about the classified mission that we all shared, and about how close we all are to the precipice of war. But that would compromise the security of our world. How much blood is spilt, that can never happen.

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So instead of talking to my fellow soldiers, I'm writing the truth in this book. Maybe it will help me clear my mind. Maybe it will help me figure out what keeps going wrong. Maybe there's still hope.

Chapter 3 by R



This - it's hard to right about, but this is what happened that day.

The day my squad, my family, was killed before me while I alone survived.

The day where everyone who had once been my friend turned their backs on me in shame, even though none of them ever had a clue about what we were doing, about why we were put in that situation, about why I was cursed with this stupid -

Let's start over.

My name is Amelie. I'm a specialist, -formerly- part of a unique squad of similarly talented specialists to preform incredibly classified missions. We were housed at the same base camp as many other soldiers out here to train, but we were never like that.

Why am I writing this down? I know all of this - no one is going to crack my code - this is stupid - how will writing down a journal help me -

We were given a mission to find, spy on, and kill a high level enemy spy who was visiting our neighbor camp on the other side of the border. It wasn't the first mission like this. It wouldn't be the last.

Well, it would be for the rest of my squad.

I'm a sniper. Long distance, sharp eyes, both in the investigative and assassinative part of our jobs. We were a mixed team, only five in number, all soldiers turned spies out of loyalty. I hadn't been doing much when it had happened. We were still in the investigative phase of things.

Then - I should have been watching closer - I should have been paying more attention. I should have done a lot of things.

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I should have realized our

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Chapter 4 by



The enemy jumped out from the woods surrounding our camp. A barrage of bullets riddled our tents. It was chaos...

I can remember running towards my mother. I had just reached out my hand to jerk her behind a rock, when her body convulsed and fell bloody, and shredded to the ground.

I gasped and cupped my hand over my mouth so as not to be heard. With all the strength left in me I made my way to the ammunition and loaded myself up with a machine gun.

I directed hatred at every murdering beast in front of me... Until there was silence. The enemy finally retreated, but not after having killed the rest of my crew.

There I was, in the middle of my basecamp, with bleeding soldiers all around me... Alone.

Chapter 5 by Jess Ash



I don't know how long I sat there in the dark, terrified they would come back. I clutched the machine gun so tightly there were indents in my skin. Fear ruled me that night. I sat up until daybreak, listening to the wind, jumping at the slightest of sounds.

It wasn't until morning that I relaxed the tiniest fraction. Then, as the sun made its way over the trees, I went for a radio. It took forever to get me shaking hands to find the right frequency, but eventually, I did.

My voice shook as I spoke into the receiver, shook with the weight of the dead and the horror I had witnessed. "Th- this is Squad 47 to Nest, reporting in from Sector Nine, copy?"

"Squad 47, you are deep in enemy territory, retain radio silence, over."

I took a deep breath that reeked of blood, trying not to cry. "This is Amelie Swords, ID 992704. I am the only one alive after a surprise attack on my camp. I am requesting immediate evacuation, over"

There was a short pause. "Negative. You're in enemy territory. You're on your own." Then, in a whisper, "Goodbye."

There was a click, and then I was really alone.

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It was then that I finally lost it. Tears streamed down my face. Each hiccuping sob brought the smell of blood. Each breath left a coppery tang in my mouth. I was in hysterics after what I'd seen.

By the time I'd calmed myself, it was about noon. I knew I couldn't stay here, so I had to leave. I gathered a pack of supplies, looting the bodies of me once-squad. Maybe it was stupid, but I wasted a few hours to bury them. I felt like they deserved at least that much.

By the time I was packed and ready to leave, the sun was beginning to set. I spent one last night in the blood-soaked camp, stealing minutes of sleep at a time.

I woke the next morning tired and stiff. But, there was no way I was spending another night in that camp, so I grabbed my bag, said a prayer for the dead, and headed into the woods, using nothing but my handheld and the sun to guide me.

Chapter 6 by Amelia Rose



My whole body ached by the time I reached the basecamp, and I was mentally and physically exhausted. However, the moment I stepped into the grounds, I was shunned.

They all believed I'd killed my crew. They all believed it was my fault. In their eyes, I was a murderer.

Chapter 7 by Amelia Rose



Sometimes, I believe them. Sometimes, when I'm dealing with the punishment for my failed mission, scraping out hardened chunks of dust and dirt from an air vents of base camp, I hate myself for killing my crew.

Sometimes, though, I hate everyone else, for thinking it's my fault, and for punishing me more than the pain of losing my family and friends.

I was in the vents, earlier today, doing the *literal* dirty work. In our base, the vents aren't cleaned until the soldiers realize they need cleaning, and then, whoever is in the wrong at the time is stuck with doing it. It's been monotonous and unfortunately I'm considered "in the wrong."

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Clearing out the vents is an awful job, and I hate it, but I don't debate because, well, someone has to do it, so it might as well be me. I'm not leaving the base anytime soon, so I guess I'll be the air cleaner.

I just wish I didn't have to be the one to do that.

Chapter 8 by Amelia Rose



According to everyone in the basecamp, it is entirely my fault that the rest of my patrol is dead. This is not true. It's just that simply, through grief, they're making me their scapegoat.

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Someday, I hope for them to change. I hope for them to realise that there is never just one person at fault. They shouldn't just create a scapegoat to make them feel better.

But, I know, that that change shall probably never happen. I know that, even if it does, I'll be stuck, cleaning the vents, and thinking about my dead family, and friends, for a long time.

I am the Scapegoat.

the end

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